

Iowa Outdoors

Iowa Department of Natural Resources

www.iowadnr.gov

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CAMPING KICK-OFF WEEKEND MAY 1, 2 AND 3

DES MOINES – With temperatures hovering in the single digits it's hard to think about spending a weekend sleeping outside. However, beginning Feb. 1, campers may reserve a campsite in an Iowa State Park for Camping Kick-off Weekend May 1, 2 and 3.

Campers in an Iowa State Park during May 1, 2 and 3 will receive a gift package that includes a camping coupon good for one night of camping at an electrical site, a free issue of *Iowa Outdoors* magazine, recipes, camping tips and more in a reusable mesh trash bag. The theme for the May 1 – 3 Camping Kick-off Weekend is to be a green camper.

The State Parks Bureau is proud to partner with Keep Iowa Beautiful and the DNR's Land Quality Bureau to provide the reusable mesh trash bags.

"We spent upwards of \$750,000 for utilities in our parks last year, so this year we are going to provide our campers with information on how they can reduce the amount of electricity and water they use in the campgrounds," said Kevin Szcodronski, chief of the State Parks Bureau for the Iowa Department of Natural Resources. "We will be encouraging the use of the reusable trash bags to collect trash around the campsite, recycle what we can, and put the rest where it goes, then keep the mesh bag for reuse."

Iowa State Parks and their campgrounds have been important for Iowans through its history during difficult economic times. State Parks are places close to home where friends and families gather to relax and relieve stress without spending a lot of money.

"Our parks were built on scenic natural areas that serve as a focal point in many Iowans lives. We are anticipating that the parks will see an up-tick in visitor numbers and campers as people stay closer to home during this recession," Szcodronski said.

Iowa's camping numbers have hovered around 700,000 during the past few years. There are 53 state parks that offer camping.

Campers will need to pay the appropriate site fees to camp during Camping Kick-off Weekend and reservations are available online at www.reserveiaparks.com or by calling the reservation hotline at 1-877-IAPARKS Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The call center is not open on weekends or state holidays. Half of all campsites are still available on a first come, first serve basis.

The camping coupon may be used at anytime after Camping Kick-off Weekend. Campers needing some of the add-on campsite amenities, such as full hook-ups or an equestrian site, may use the coupon, but will need to pay the difference.

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RECONNECTING WITH NATURE SYMPOSIUM

GRINNELL - Reconnecting with Nature Symposium is scheduled for February 11, 12 and 14 at Grinnell College, in Grinnell.

Worldwide, people are increasingly disconnected from the natural world. Seven of 10 American mothers played outdoors as children, but only 31 percent of today's children do. A study by the Kaiser Family Foundation found American children ages 8-18 spend an average of 45 hours a week watching television and playing video games. Since 1987, visitation to national parks and other public lands has steadily declined.

This symposium is dedicated to evaluating these trends, assessing the significance of the problem, and discussing how to address it. Prominent scholars from the fields of psychology, education, and ecology will present the current state of knowledge about the issue. A panel of local educators and representatives of state government and the private sector will discuss possible solutions.

The symposium on Feb. 11 at 4:15 p.m. will also include a teacher workshop at 7 p.m., on place-based environmental education and a Saturday activity in nature at Grinnell College's Conard Environmental Research Area. The Department of Natural Resource's Aquatic Education Program will offer up to an \$80 stipend for teachers wishing to attend the symposium and workshop.

David Sobel, MEd, whose work is cited in Richard Louv's bestselling "*Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature Deficit Disorder*" will be a keynote speaker. [Sobel](#) has been involved in teacher preparation at Antioch University New England for more than 30 years and advocates educational reform using the local environment as a laboratory to teach about science, ecology, and social studies.

Sobel's publications include *Childhood and Nature: Design Principles for Educators* (2008), *Place-Based Education: Connecting Classrooms and Communities* (2004), *Beyond Ecophobia: Reclaiming the Heart in Nature Education* (1999), and *Mapmaking with Children: Sense-of-Place Education in the Elementary Years* (1998).

For more information about the symposium and/or to register to attend, contact Lauren Van Wyk at vanwyk@grinnell.edu.

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IOWA HIGH SCHOOL AND SCHOLASTIC CLAY TARGET SEASON SET TO KICK-OFF

The Iowa High School and Scholastic Clay Target Program is organized trap, skeet and sporting clays shooting for youth in grades 12 and under. The official clay target season kicks-off on March 7, however many teams are getting organized with mandatory parent/athlete kickoff meetings in the coming weeks.

Starting in March, most teams practice one to two times per week, travel to local competitions as part of a statewide league, then attend the state championship events in late May and mid-June. Athletes must participate as part of a registered team to be eligible for participation.

The 2009 season should see close to 50 teams statewide with the bulk of those being school-affiliated programs and the remainder being club-based. "This sport fills a niche for students in our high school who otherwise may not have an opportunity to compete in athletic and extracurricular activities," stressed Dan Ramaeker, teacher and head trapshooting coach at Mason City. "It really hooks kids into the school and the community. It also gives kids an incentive to be in class and keep their grades up."

General program administration and coach training is provided by the DNR. The DNR will also host the state championship events in late May and mid-June. For additional information contact Ben Berka, DNR Shooting Sports Coordinator at 515-281-0140 or ben.berka@dnr.iowa.gov.

Below is a list of statewide programs wishing to recruit additional participants:

Des Moines Area Clay Crushers
New Pioneer Clay Target Center, Waukee
Guy Thomas
515-229-4544
Guy.thomas@mchsi.com
Kick-off Meeting February 26 at New Pioneer Clay Target Center

Carroll County High School Trap
Practice location: AVAD Hunt Club, Coon Rapids
Royce Stangl
712-683-5752
avad@iowatelecom.net
Start up Meeting: Tuesday Jan 27 at 6 p.m. - AVAD Hunt Club.

The Guthrie County Claybusters
Fin and Feathers gun club in Panora
George Hemmen
Phone 515-250-7819
kestrel@iowatelecom.net

Davenport West High Falcons
DLS Shooting Range, Long Grove
Robert E. Gill
563-210-5863 Cell#
563-386-5500 School#
gillr@davenportschools.org
gillr1958@mchsi.com
Kick-off meeting will be at West High School (time and date to be announced)

Oskaloosa Shooting Team
Mahaska County Izaak Walton, Oskaloosa
Steve Heaton 641-660-3798, Larry Gay 641-295-0331
steve.heaton@musco.com
Kick-off Meeting: First part of February, call for information

Cedar-Falls Tigers Trapshooting Club
Cedar-Falls Gun Club
David Grund
319-610-1945
grundd@cedar-falls.k12.ia.us
Kick-off Meeting: 3:30 p.m., Feb. 18 at High School in the Annex Building, Room 22

Lynnville-Sully
Big Springs Shooting Complex
Cecil Arthur
641-990-3539
carthur@gmrc.com

Anamosa Schools
Izaak Walton League - Anamosa
Rick Worcester
319-551-2485
rickworcester@alliantenergy.com
Practice – Sundays at 1 p.m.

Centerville High School SCTP
Elizebeth Gaskins
641-856-0837
elizabeth.gaskins@gpaea.k12.ia.us
Spring kick-off will be sometime toward the end of March

Adams County Trap Team
Corning Gun Club, Corning
David Fuller
bdfuller@frontiernet.net

Mount Vernon
Izaak Walton-Anamosa
Tom Wilkinson
319-361-3535
wilkinsonmv@msn.com

Looking for sponsors to help with team expenses. Boys and girls in grades 8-12 in Mount Vernon-Lisbon area are welcome to join.

Harlan FFA Trap Teams
Shelby County Trap and Skeet Range, Harlan
Coaches Dan Leinen (Head), Leland Kaufman, Justin Wagner, Tony Sondag, Frank Sick
(712) 755-3101
dleinen@harlan.k12.ia.us

Ankeny High School - Hawks
Ankeny Izaak Walton League
Randy Nelson
(515) 963-9432
Rpattn1@msn.com
Kick-off meeting/registration: 6 p.m., January 29 at AHS

Montezuma Shooting Sports Club Practice Location
Brownells Big Springs Shooting Complex
Lana Taylor
641-623-5750
lanactaylor@zumatel.net
February 21, 9 a.m. until noon, at Brownell's Training Room, 200 S. Front St.,
Montezuma

Mason City High School Trap Shooting Team
Ventura Gun Club/RIVER City Rifle & Pistol Club
Dan Ramaecker and Kerri Schroeder
641-421-4431
dramaecker@mason-city.k12.ia.us, kschroeder@mason-city.k12.ia.us
Parents Meeting: 7 p.m., Jan. 29, in the Information Center

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